[*Translation*]

Bilaspur Dam Project in Rajasthan

*810. SHRI RAM NARAIN BERWA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the present position of the Bilaspur Dam Project in Rajasthan;

(b)the details of irrigation potential likely to be created on completion of the project and the areas to be benefited thereby; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES(SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): (a) to (c). The State Government has intimated that they have undertaken the preparation of a modified report as a multi-purpose project to provide for irrigation and water supply components on the basis of the hydrology approved by the Central Water Commission. The details of the project such as the extent of irrigation and the period of construction are not finalised.

[*English*]

Rise in prices of vegetables and fruits

*811. DR.V. RAJESWARAN:
SHRI R. DHANUSKODI ATHITHAN:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the steep hike in prices of vegetables and fruits in most of the cities in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to bring down their prices;

(d) whether the Government propose to distribute these commodities through public distribution system; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN):(a) There has been some increase in the month end prices of some of the vegetables and fruits during 1991, as compared to 1990, for example,onion, tomato, apple and banana.

(b) The main reasons for higher prices have been the heavy and unseasonal rains in onion producing areas of Maharashtra and Gujarat, general inflationary trend, increase in the cost of packaging material, steep hike in the prices of petroleum products, thereby increasing transportation cost, etc.

(c) In order to keep the prices of vegetables under check, Government of India has been implementing a central sector scheme for the production of fruits and vegetables in the country since 1989-90. The sanctioned outlay for the year 1991-92 is Rs. 173 lakhs. Another Central sector scheme on integrated development of tropical and arid zone fruits with the outlay of Rs. 192.085 lakhs has been implemented for production of fruits in the country. Delhi Administration is making vegetables available at reasonable rates to the consumers in capital through static outlets and mobile van. Mother Dairy is also selling vegetables and fruits at reasonable rates through 166 outlets in Delhi/Noida.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Loss Incurred by NSC

*812. SHRI C.P. MUDALAGIRIYAPPA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the loss incurred by the National Seeds Corporation during the last three years;

(b) the reasons for the mounting loss; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to revitalise the Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE(SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRN):(a) The amount of loss suffered by NSC during the last three years is as under:-

(Rs. in lakhs)

Year	*Amount of loss*
1987-88	190.50
1988-89	289.83
1989-90	391.10

(b) It has been found that losses are because of:-

(i) Increase in input prices and procurement prices paid to the seed growers without corresponding increase in the sale price of seed;

(ii) Increase in fixed overhead expenses on account of general price rise and increase in salary and allowances of the staff of the Corporation as per recommendations of High powered Pay Committee (H.P.C.C.);

(iii) Heavy interest burden;

(iv) Under utilisation of infrastructural facilities created under National Seeds Project Phase-I and II due to cut-back in production;

(v) Reduction in marketing segment of NSC due to competition from State seeds Corporations (SSCs) and private seed industry; and

(vi) Excess staff.

(c) To improve the working of the Corporation, a Consultant has been appointed by the Government of India under National Seeds Project phase-III, a scheme implemented with the assistance of World Bank. The Diagnostic Report of the consultant has been received and after careful consideration of the same, the consultant has been asked to give further details/clarify certain portions of the Report. This Report will form the basis of the steps to be taken to revamp the Corporation.

Telecommunication Facilities in Rural Areas

*813. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken any decision to provide better telecommunication facilities in rural areas;

(b) if so, the details of such facilities proposed to be provided to the villages by the end of 1995;

(c) the efforts made in that direction in Rajasthan so far; and

(d) the details of the target set for providing such facilities during the Eighth plan, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Public telephone facilities has been